

(c) The details of quarterly figures (growth rates\*), sector-wise during 2000-01 are given below:

Quarter	Mining	Manu- facturing	Electri- city	Overall
April-June 2000	3.7	6.5	5.1	6.1
July-September 2000	3.8	5.9	1.9	5.3
October-December 2000	4.9	5.5	7.5	5.6

\*Percentage change over the corresponding period of previous year.

#### Creation of artificial demand for cement

16. SHRI V. V. RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that five cement companies viz., Gujarat Ambuja, L&T, ACC, Grasim and India Cements which control more than 50% of the Cement market decided to cut back their production to create artificial demand and hike prices; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. RAMAN): (a) and (b) The cement production has fallen in the months of December, 2000 and January, 2001 compared to production in the corresponding months of December, 1999 and January, 2000. A statement is enclosed (See below).

The production of individual cement plants is not maintained Centrally in the Ministry.

Government is seized of the situation and the situation is being monitored.

**Statement**

*Creation of artificial demand for cement*

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December, 1999	—	8.08 million tonnes
December, 2000	—	7.08 million tonnes (–12.4% variation)
January, 2000	—	8.58 million tonnes
January, 2001	—	7.38 million tonnes (–14% variation)

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**FDI in Plantation Sector**

17. SHRI V. V. RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering a proposal to allow Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the Plantation Sector; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH) (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A proposal to allow 74% foreign direct investment in the plantation sector is still under consideration of the Government.

**Purchase of rubber by STC**

18. SHRI V. V. RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the quantity of natural rubber purchased by the STC during 2000, month-wise;

(b) the quantum of natural rubber sold out of this and at what price; and

(c) whether the Government propose to export natural rubber?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) and (b) Details of the quantum of Natural Rubber procured, sold and